

**Draft Summary of the Environmental Work Group Meeting
Oroville Facilities Relicensing (FERC Project No. 2100)
December 11, 2002**

The Department of Water Resources (DWR) hosted a meeting for the Environmental Work Group on December 11, 2002 in Oroville.

A summary of the discussion, decisions made, and action items is provided below. This summary is not intended to be a transcript, analysis of the meeting, or to indicate agreement or disagreement with any of the items summarized, except where expressly stated. The intent is to present a summary for interested parties who could not attend the meeting. The following are attachments to this summary:

Attachment 1	Meeting Agenda
Attachment 2	Meeting Attendees
Attachment 3	Flip Chart Notes
Attachment 4	Interim Progress Report SP-F3.1, Task 2C, December 6, 2002
Attachment 5	Final Report SP-F3.1, Task 2D
Attachment 6	Interim Report for SP-F3.2, Task 3A
Attachment 7	SP-T2 Progress Summary
Attachment 8	Cumulative Impacts Assessment
Attachment 9	PM&E Development Process
Attachment 10	Proposed PM&E Development Matrix

I. Introduction

Attendees were welcomed to the Environmental Work Group meeting. Attendees introduced themselves and their affiliations. The desired outcomes of the meeting were discussed as listed on the meeting agenda. The meeting agenda and list of meeting attendees are appended to this summary as Attachments 1 and 2, respectively. Meeting flip chart notes are included as Attachment 3.

II. Action Items – November 20, 2002 Environmental Work Group Meeting

A summary of the November 20, 2002 Environmental Work Group meeting is posted on the relicensing web site. The Facilitator reviewed the status of action items from that meeting as follows:

Action Item #E60:	Written comments to Randy Brown on SP-F9 Literature Review
Responsible:	Environmental Work Group participants
Status:	Deferred to next meeting since due date is December 20, 2002.
Action Item #E61:	Confirm coordination between SP-W7 and SP-LU1 and SP-LU2
Responsible:	DWR
Status:	Steve Ford with DWR confirmed that Jerry Boles, water quality study lead is coordinating SP-W7 with the land use studies.
Action Item #E62:	Update NMFS on availability of data sets for download
Responsible:	DWR
Status:	Steve Ford distributed CDs with the public domain data base layers and indicated the information would be available soon on the web.
Action Item #E63:	Clarify copyright constraints for document scanning and availability
Responsible:	DWR
Status:	Steve Ford reported that DWR is looking into the issue of copyright as it pertains to the consultation record and making available to participants the information used during the relicensing process. He indicated that in some instances, DWR should be able to provide links to web locations where material is already posted. It is still unclear what DWR will be able to scan and post. At the least, DWR will be able to

provide the pathway for a participant to obtain the document in question. Anna Kastner representing DFG asked if DWR expected to post all of the information and data used and Steve responded that it did not include the technical data such as the Feather River Hatchery records.

- Action Item #E64:** Cull potential PM&E measures from Scoping Document 2 Appendix B
Responsible: DWR/Consulting Team
Status: The Facilitator requested this item be deferred until the PM&E discussion scheduled for later in the meeting.
- Action Item #E65:** Include contact person and executive summary to interim and draft documents provided for review by Environmental Work Group
Responsible: DWR
Status: The Facilitator reported that this action item is an on-going revision to deliverables and contact information and an executive summary are included with the deliverables to be discussed today.
- Action Item #E66:** Develop Environmental Work Group agendas three months in advance for planning prioritization purposes
Responsible: DWR
Status: The Facilitator told the participants that January and February draft agendas have been developed and asked that they be discussed during the Next Steps item on today's agenda.

III. Update on Plenary Group Actions

The Plenary Group cancelled their December 10, 2002 meeting so no update was necessary. The Plenary Group will next meet on January 7, 2003 via teleconference call due to a light agenda.

IV. Study Deliverables and Implementation Updates

SP-F3.1 – Task 2C

Two copies of Interim Progress Report SP-F3.1, Task 2C, one dated December 3, 2002 and one dated December 6, 2003 were distributed. The December 6th version was in redlined/strikeouts format which track the changes between the two versions. (Attachments 4) Dave Olson with the consulting team explained that the December 6th version includes early life-stage rearing information. He reported that their findings indicate a 50% survival rate for small mouth bass during the month of June when conditions are expected to be the worst. This is well above the 20% survival criteria recommended by DFG. He added that Task 2C is complete and this report will be incorporated into the final Task 2 report with no changes anticipated.

SP-F3.1 – Task 2D

Dave Olson distributed copies of a Final Report SP-F3.1, Task 2D and described the literature review and interviews conducted for this study. He reported that there is little active management for sturgeon in California reservoirs and while there may be small pockets of suitable habitat for white sturgeon in the North and Middle forks of the Feather River, additional information is needed to determine the quantity and availability of sturgeon habitat. Without the appropriate habitat sturgeon populations in Lake Oroville may not be sustainable and existing management practices may not be applicable. Rich Walking representing the Natural Heritage Institute asked for a description of the historic and current sturgeon fishery in Lake Oroville. Dave responded that the presumption is that sturgeons were probably trapped behind the dam when constructed. Today, few anecdotal reports of sturgeon catches or jumps are reported. Jerry Boles reported that they caught a 3-foot sturgeon in a gill net during this summer's fieldwork. The Final Report SP-F3.1, Task 2D is provided as Attachment 5 to this summary. Steve Ford asked that participants review all of the documents provided and send comments to the study authors with a copy sent to Terry Mills before January 10, 2003. He asked all study authors to provide their e-mail addresses. (See Flip Chart Notes)

SP-F3.2 – Task 3A

Michael Perrone distributed copies of the Interim Report for SP-F3.2, Task 3A. (Attachment 6) He reported that the dive survey conducted by NMFS found no sturgeon, so no radio tagging was possible. He also reported that further collection efforts yielded no sturgeon eggs or larvae. The study will continue with sampling during up-migration periods, thought to be controlled by flow. Michael said they would be contacting sturgeon fishing guides for local information that will assist in sampling efforts.

SP-T2 – Progress Summary

Gail Kuenster with DWR distributed copies of SP-T2 Progress Summary. (Attachment 7) She reported that the Project study area might support several plant species listed under FESA, CESA, CNPS or USFS. Surveys were begun in late May so flowering periods for some species was missed; these species will be re-surveyed next year. Weed surveys are being conducted concurrently with other surveys. They are surveying lands within 150 feet of Project facilities including trails and all of the Forest Service land within the Project Boundary. Gail reported that two populations of Butte County *Calycadenia* were located in Loafer Creek Campground and populations of four-angled spikerush were found near the Afterbay and Oroville Wildlife Area. Linnea Hanson representing Plumas National Forest said she would be forwarding a draft revision of rare plants list from the Forest Service. She also noted a population of rush skeleton weed near the Enterprise Bridge.

Woody Elliot representing State Parks asked if Gail would be surveying the proposed trail extension from Potter's Ravine to the Bloomer boat-in facilities. He clarified that the project could be part of a proposed PM&E measure or a separate State Parks project. Steve Ford asked Gail to prepare a map of the surveyed areas so State Parks could see which lands were included. Rich DeHaven representing FWS provided comments from Betty Warne, a senior biologist with FWS. She suggested that the survey timing was too early and biologists should note phenological stage of reference plants and include stage information on field notes. She also noted that FWS wants surveys within 500 feet of disturbance and no collection should occur from species with less than 100 individuals.

SP-W3 – Task 1A

The Interim Report for SP-W3, Task 1A was distributed at the November Environmental Work Group meeting. Jerry Boles explained that he had prepared a list of sites, visited the sites, identified potential contaminants present, and developed a monitoring plan that includes bacteria, dissolved oxygen, temperature, turbidity, petroleum, pesticides, and nutrients. Steve Ford asked that comments on the Interim Report be provided to Jerry by January 10th. Jerry agreed to check with Sharon Stohrer with the SWRCB for any comments. Jerry added the monitoring would occur during spring and next fall.

V. Cumulative Issues Discussion

Steve Ford distributed a letter DWR received recently from NMFS that was promised along with one from FWS at the end of the Cumulative/ESA Guidelines Task Force meetings. After participants had an opportunity to read the letter, Rich DeHaven representing FWS indicated that it is very similar to the letter he expects to provide from FWS. Several participants requested the letter electronically and DWR agreed to forward the letter on request. Mike Melanson also suggested that the letter be forwarded to other interested parties and DWR agreed to do that. Russ Stein with DWR presented an update on the cumulative impacts assessment process that is following the steps outlined in the Draft Guidance document. He reviewed a timeline for the cumulative analysis and described actions taken toward each step. (Attachment 8) He also reviewed what would be included in Scoping Document 2 (SD2). Steve Ford added that the project description in SD2 would include operational constraints and their cumulative analysis

would focus on the results of those constraints as they affect Oroville Facilities and the Project boundary not the constraints themselves. The decisions would not be analyzed, only the consequences of implementation.

Russ Stein asked that the participants review the information in his presentation and the NMFS letter and provide comments by January 10th to rstein@water.ca.gov or (916) 445-6443. The target distribution date for SD2 is January 27th.

VI. PM&E Discussion

Terry Mills, DWR Environmental Resource Area Manager, described the PM&E development process under consideration by the Plenary Group's Process Task Force and suggested that the Environmental Work Group participants should revise their approach to PM&E development. His presentation is provided as Attachment 9 to this summary. Rather than begin by sorting Appendix B of SD1 as suggested at the last meeting, he suggested that the Environmental Work Group start using the Plenary Groups Process Task Force guidance as is being developed. The Task Force is suggesting that we develop resource goals. He suggested that participants review the goals and objectives identified earlier in the relicensing process during development of the Issue Sheets. He distributed Issue Sheets W1, W2 and W3 as samples and then distributed a table that incorporated information from the issue sheets into a proposed PM&E development matrix. (Attachment 10) Terry informed the group that the environmental issue sheets include 113 resource goals and suggested this number be condensed. Eric Theiss expressed some concern about tying the process to past activities and wants to keep open the possibility of adding new PM&Es. Terry responded that the process is still open and should be able to accommodate new issues. He suggested DWR and the consulting team try to consolidate the water quality goals for review by the Environmental Work Group at their January meeting. Eric Theiss requested and the group agreed that DWR and the consulting team would try to consolidate the Fisheries resource goals first. DWR agreed to look at the fisheries goals first but wanted the flexibility to work on the water quality goals instead because the fisheries staff is busy working on other deliverables for the same meeting.

Terry Mills asked Eric Theiss if he would be able to provide a more detailed description of a PM&E measure, possibly from a recent relicensing. Eric agreed to provide a prototype PM&E measure.

Next Steps / Meetings

The Facilitator reviewed the draft future meeting agendas and indicated that there were some changes needed based on discussions at this meeting. The participants agreed that knowing what deliverables and updates were due at future meetings was very helpful. Eric Theiss indicated that there is a conflicting technical meeting during the same week in February that the next work group meeting is scheduled for and asked if the Work Group could reschedule the February meeting a week earlier. The participants agreed that the February Work Group meeting would be held on February 19 and the January Environmental Work Group meeting will be:

Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2003
Time: 9:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Location: Kelly Ridge Golf Course Meeting Room

Action Items

The following action items identified by the Environmental Work Group includes a description of the action, the participant responsible for the action, and due date.

(Carry Over Item)

Action Item #E60: Written comments to Randy Brown on SP-F9 Literature Review
Responsible: Environmental Work Group participants
Due Date: December 20, 2002

Action Item #E67: Prepare a map of the surveyed areas for SP-T2
Responsible: DWR
Due Date: January 29, 2002

Action Item #E68: Comments on reports to authors and cc Terry Mills
Responsible: Participants
Due Date: January 10, 2003

Action Item #E69: Distribute NMFS letter electronically by request and to Cumulative/ESA Task Force
Responsible: DWR
Due Date: January 10, 2003

Action Item #E70: Draft letter requesting species list from NMFS
Responsible: DWR
Due Date: January 10, 2003

Action Item #E71: Comments on Cumulative presentation to Russ Stein
Responsible: Participants
Due Date: January 10, 2003

Action Item #E72: Consolidate the 39 Fisheries resource goals and distribute to Environmental Work Group
Responsible: DWR/Consulting Team
Due Date: January 22, 2003

Action Item #E73: Provide a more detailed description of a PM&E measure as template for information needs
Responsible: NMFS
Due Date: January 29, 2003